

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Specification Amendments:

The specification has been amended to correct minor typographical and grammatical errors. No new matter has been added.

Interview Summary:

Applicant's representative is in receipt of an Interview Summary sent by the PTO, which states that Examiner Kumar stated that he would fax a PTO-892 form with WO 99/35763 to Applicant's representative, and whereby Applicant's representative stated that she had that reference already.

Abstract Amendments:

The Abstract has been amended in order to remove legal phraseology ("means"). A new Abstract is being submitted with this Amendment and Reply.

Status of Claims:

Claims 1-3, 9-11, 18-20 and 30-32 are currently being canceled.

Claims 4-8, 12-17, 21, 23-29 and 33-38 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment amends and cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 4-8, 12-17, 21-29 and 33-38 are now pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 4-6, 12-14, 17, 21-24, 26, 29, 33-35 and 38. By way of this amendment and reply, claims 4-6, 12-14, 17, 21, 24,

26, 29, 33-35 and 38 have each been amended to place those claims in independent form to include the features of their respective base claim and any intervening claims. Also, claims 7, 8, 16, 25, 27, 28, 36 and 37 have each been amended to depend from one of "objected to claims" (that have now been placed in independent form). Accordingly, each of the presently pending claims is now believed to be in condition for allowance, in accordance with the indications made in the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – Indefiniteness Rejection:

In the Office Action, the disclosure was objected to because of minor informalities noted on page 2 of the Office Action. Those informalities, as well as other informalities found by Applicant's representative, have been corrected by way of this amendment and reply.

Claim Objections:

In the Office Action, claims 18-29 were objected to because of informalities noted on page 2 of the Office Action. With respect to presently pending claims 22-29 (claims 18-21 have been canceled), the informalities raised in the Office Action have been corrected by way of this amendment and reply.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 7-11, 15, 16, 18-20, 25, 27, 28, 30-32, 36 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by WO 99/35763 to Sourour. Due to the cancellation of claims 1-3, 9-11, 18-20 and 30-32, and due to the changed dependencies of claims 7, 8, 15, 16, 25, 27, 28, 36 and 37, so that they now depend from an "objected to" claim that have been placed in independent form, these rejections have been overcome.

Conclusion:

Since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the Office Action that have not been addressed in this amendment and reply, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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